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Be Outside



Photo courtesy Rob Ryan



BE OUTSIDE!

Photo courtesy Steve Schmidt



Photo courtesy Mike Maffey



How do you like to spend your free time? Hanging around with friends? Reading or drawing? Doing things with your family? Playing sports? Watching TV? Playing and exploring outside? As it turns out, spending time outside is one of the best things you can do for yourself. So, what's the big deal about being outside? Let's take a closer look. . . .



Photo courtesy Jeff Heindel

Spending time outside is really good for you in many ways. You are healthier, your ability to pay attention is better, and you just feel better about yourself. Being outside also helps you learn to take care of the world around you.

How can being outside make you healthy? Well, for starters, one of the best things that happens when you are outside is exercise. Being outside makes you want to run, jump, climb, ride your bike, play and explore. All those things exercise your body. This helps to build strong bones and muscles. A strong body can help you fight off germs that make you sick. Exercise also helps you stay a healthy weight.

Spending time outside can make you feel better about yourself. Have you ever felt sad? Maybe you had to move away



Photo courtesy Adare Evans

Photo courtesy Virgil Moore



from your best friend, or you did not do as well on your math test as you thought. These things can make you feel sad and that is normal. Spending some time outside can help you work through many feelings such as sadness, disappointment or anger. No one is exactly sure how it works, but being outside often helps us feel better and helps us think about what is bothering us.

One thing we do know is that being outside helps you relax. When you are relaxed, you are able to concentrate and think more clearly. When you are not relaxed, you can feel stress. Being stressed for a short time is not bad. But if you are stressed for a long time, it can be hard on your body and your mind. Many people find that a quick walk outdoors or even looking out a window can help them feel less stressed.

Being outside even helps you do better in school! Think about your science class---would you rather learn about trees by listening to your teacher talk about trees or by going outside to look at trees? If you can go outside, not only can your teacher talk about trees, but also you can feel the bark, collect leaves, make bark rubbings and listen to the wind through the branches. Chances are, you will remember much more about trees if you can be outside with them. Some schools are creating outdoor classrooms and schoolyard habitats where students can have lessons outside and explore. Does your school have an outdoor classroom or place to explore? If your school doesn't, talk to your parents, teachers and principal about it. Students, just like you, have helped create outdoor classrooms at their schools.

Photo courtesy Greg Painter



People who enjoy the outdoors also know how important it is to take care of the world around them. These people respect the natural world by doing things like not littering and staying on trails when they hike, mountain bike or ride an ATV. When they go hunting or fishing, they follow the rules. They camp in the proper places and leave their campsite better than when they found it. At home, they might recycle and not waste water or energy. Most of these people learned to be responsible for the outdoors when they were young. They did it by being outside doing a lot of the same things you like to do. So go outside! Explore the world around you. It's a good thing – for you, for your body and for nature.



Photo courtesy Vicky Runnoe

We asked our readers to send in their favorite things to do outside. The following ten are some of our favorites. The choices were difficult to make because all the entries were very special! Thank you to all who entered!



LOVE OUTDOOR!

Twit, twit, twit! Have you ever heard this sound? You are right! This is the sound of birds whistling! In the city, you would not hear any birds whistling. Would you like to know why? It's because the city is not the place they usually live in. The place they mostly live in is nature. The forest is the place where you can smell fresh air. It's also a place where you can see wildlife. Not every people like to be outdoors, but I do. My favorite outdoor place is Boise River in Idaho. I love to go rafting in Boise River. Because that's the time I get to row the raft. Anyway, being outdoors is very important to me because if I hiked to mountains everyday, I would be able to discover new things everyday while I'm hiking in the mountains. I can learn what

kind of plants there are in the mountain, what kind of birds live in the mountain....

If you are one if those people who are not brave enough to be in the nature, are you sure you don't want to change your mind? The nature is the place where you can rest your heart.

I just love being outdoor! **Rosa P**, Grade 4, Boise



OUTDOORS

Going outdoors is great! It's also good for your health. Every summer my sister and I go to New Hampshire and explore my aunt and uncle's forest area. I like it there because it makes me feel happy. There are many tall pine trees, and on the ground you hear the crunching of pine needles and the soft swish of ferns as they pass under your feet. My sister and I go stream climbing, a fun thing we invented. We find a log and cross it, hoping that it doesn't have any slippery algae that might cause you to fall into the swampy stream. You can have lots of fun at any outdoor place! If you ever have some spare time, get outside and enjoy yourself!

Agnes, Grade 4, Boise

The Outdoors are beautiful and exciting, and that's why I enjoy them so much. The Outdoors are beautiful with the leaves swaying in the wind, the flowers with their colorful petals, and the sun shining on everything. Outside is exciting with its bugs scurrying by, its butterflies fluttering by, and its sound of the wind whistling.

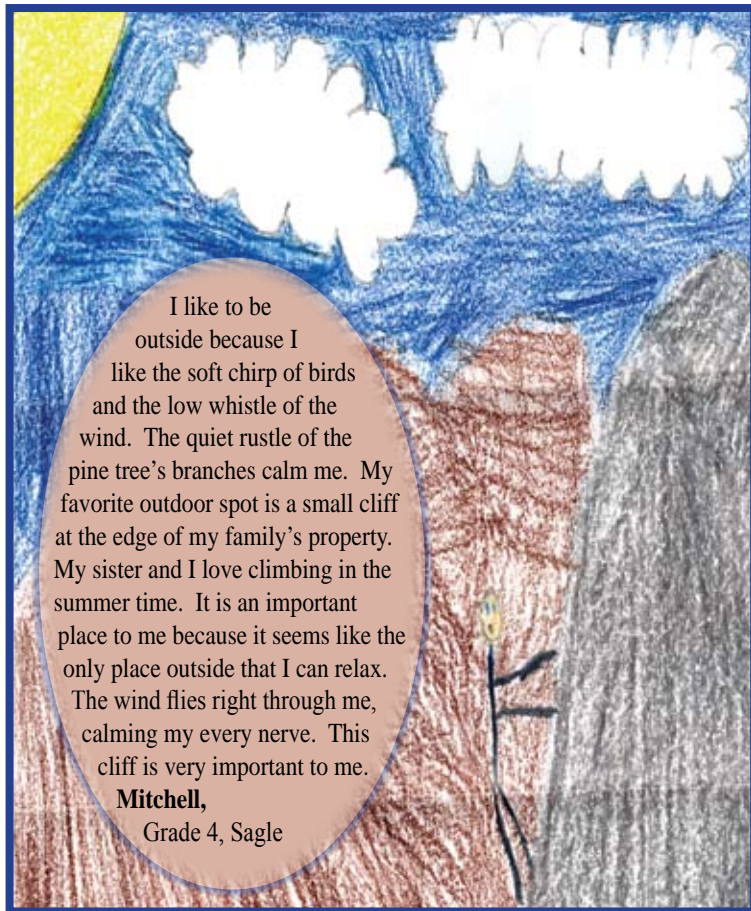
Have you ever been on a swing, swinging as high as you can in your backyard, and just listening and watching the outdoors? Well, that's exactly my favorite outside spot. It's important to me because I love to be there. I go there when I'm feeling bad or upset. I just get on it, take off, and feel the wind in my hair, and see all the creatures.

When I'm on it, I like to read, do homework or even just swing.

Sometimes when it's raining, I go out with an umbrella and play on it. Even when it's snowing I go out and get on it, look up and try to catch a snowflake in my mouth. My favorite outdoor spot is fun and I like it.

Madeline, Grade 5, Pocatello





I like to be outside because I like the soft chirp of birds and the low whistle of the wind. The quiet rustle of the pine tree's branches calm me. My favorite outdoor spot is a small cliff at the edge of my family's property. My sister and I love climbing in the summer time. It is an important place to me because it seems like the only place outside that I can relax. The wind flies right through me, calming my every nerve. This cliff is very important to me.

Mitchell,
Grade 4, Sagle

The sun radiates warmth as the Salmon River sprays me with cool, clean water, as our raft glides over white rapids while drinking an ice cold Gatorade. I take in the gorgeous scenery and I think of my friends at home and how lucky I am to be here. On the sides of the river, the deer frolic, osprey fly into their nests, blue heron glide over the riverbank. The trees are thick and lush and cover much of the mountains sides. Most of the upper mountains continue to be covered by crisp white snow. For years, my family has been traveling to the Salmon Valley to enjoy rafting, hiking and the other incredible things the valley has to offer. I look around and wonder what Lewis and Clark saw when they passed through the valley. Did they find it as an obstacle to be crossed? Did Sacagawea realize the beauty and majesty of her surroundings? Or was she so familiar with the area she didn't give it a second thought? Whatever they thought: Heaven can't be any better than this. **Jon,** Grade 5, Pocatello

GRANDMA'S CABIN

I love to be outdoors, but my favorite place is my grandma and grandpa's cabin. It's up in Montana. Their house is about 100 miles away from it. There are a ton of deer, elk and birds near it. You can also go fishing, but you won't catch much. We found a trail that we like to walk with their dogs. I learned how to kayak in the lake. It's really tricky. We went around an island and looked for a family of river otters. We also went on a really long motor boat ride to see what my grandpa thought was a dead wolf. It turned out not to be. It's great to be around the campfire with friends and family in the evening. I especially like the marshmallows. I ate too many. I love it there! **Kolbie,** Grade 4, Boise





HOBO MOUNTAIN

My wonderful outdoor place is a rocky land my friends and I call Hobo Mountain. We all think running free there is great exercise. There's a pond next to it where we catch jumpy frogs and squiggly tadpoles. In the spring we all run around everyone's yard. In the summer my friends and I gather together and play flashlight tag. In the fall we make leaf piles and jump in them with our cozy sweaters on. In the winter, blankets of snow cover the mountain. We have snowball fights and sled down the sledding hill. We get extra comfy so our toes don't get cold. I love getting exercise here!

Grace, Grade 4, Boise

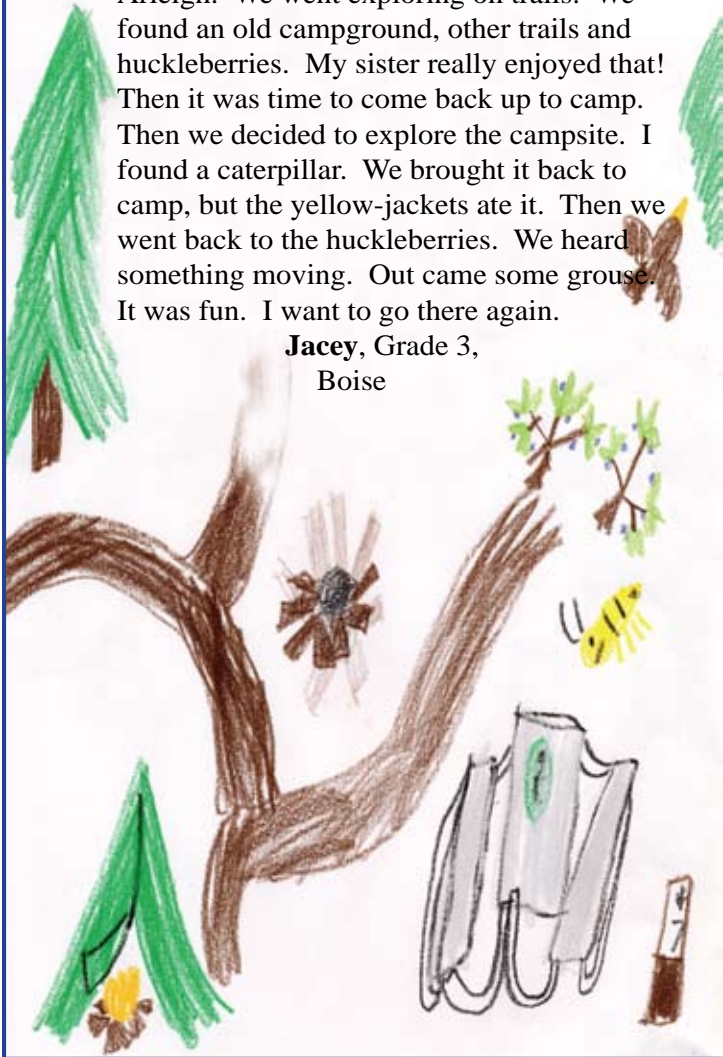


Hiking is fun because it is outdoors. You can listen to birds. I go with my cousin and Uncle Brian. I like to go hiking in the woods. You get a hiking stick. You can sit down and rest, eat and drink. It's fun to do it. I love hiking and that's the truth.

Alexandria, Grade 3, Boise

It is fun going to Edna Creek campground. It is only about one hour to get there. One time we went there with our friends, Kennedy and Arleigh. We went exploring on trails. We found an old campground, other trails and huckleberries. My sister really enjoyed that! Then it was time to come back up to camp. Then we decided to explore the campsite. I found a caterpillar. We brought it back to camp, but the yellow-jackets ate it. Then we went back to the huckleberries. We heard something moving. Out came some grouse. It was fun. I want to go there again.

Jacey, Grade 3,
Boise



Camping is great family time and very fun. So, my family and I go camping in McCall every summer. We do lots of adventurous and exciting things there. Such as, swimming in the lake, making sand castles on the beach, My brother and I make huge ones! Playing kickball with all our good friends and going on long bike trips with my dad. I can even sometimes smell and taste the sweet scent of pine while I'm rushing along the brown dirt road on my bike.

Camping in McCall is very important to me because I've gone every summer since I was a little girl and I continue to go back every year. It's also important to me because of the gorgeous scenery and lake. That's because I've never seen anything like it before.

Every night before we go back to Boise we roast marshmallows and hotdogs with our friends around a big warm happy fire. We chat and laugh and then we hop in our campers and go to bed.

Finally in the morning we'll leave and come back next summer to go camping in McCall. Can't wait to go back next year!!!

Audrey, Grade 4, Boise



Photo courtesy Kurt Stieglitz

A NOTE TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS



The issue of nature deficit disorder has come to the forefront among child advocates. The disconnection that has occurred between nature and children has negatively impacted children's health and well-being. As adults, we need to help



children experience nature. It doesn't need to cost a lot or require a lot of time.

All you have to do is open the door. Go explore your backyard or neighborhood park. You might be surprised by what you and your children will find. There are many wonders to discover outside! For more ideas on getting children outside, visit the Be Outside website at <http://www.beoutsideidaho.org>.

Things to do Outside

M U J I N V E N T A G A M E O
 J U U E E R T A B M I L C B D
 H B M I L C K C O R K E S R Y
 S H P A R G O T O H P E K A T
 I F I Y O X N B C D R A W F B
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 E L I S T E N T O N A T U R E

Photo courtesy Anja Fredericks



Photo courtesy Charlie Justus

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| Bike | Build a Fort | Observe Wildlife |
| Camp | Climb a Tree | Rockclimb |
| Canoe | Count Stars | Take Photographs |
| Draw | Have a Picnic | Play Hide and Seek |
| Hike | Jump in Leaves | Sled |
| Hunt | Listen to Nature | Ski |
| Fish | Invent a Game | |
| Raft | Make Mudpies | |
| Run | | |

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WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU !

If you have a letter, poem or question for *Wildlife Express*, it may be included in a future issue! Send it to the address printed above!

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov>

